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THE FIRST 50,000 NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH CORPS ENROLLEES.

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THE NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH CORPS (NYC), A PART OF THE WORK-TRAINING PROGRAM AUTHORIZED BY THE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 1964, FIRST ENROLLED YOUTH DURING THE LATTER PART OF DECEMBER 1964. THIS REPORT COMPARES SOME OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FIRST 50,000 ENROLLEES AND THEIR HOUSEHOLDS TO THE GENERAL CATEGORY OF POVERTY-STRICKEN HOUSEHOLDS THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE NATION, AND COMPARES NYC ENROLLEES WITH PARTICIPANTS IN OTHER ANTIPOVERTY PROGRAMS AND OTHER MAJOR MANPOWER TRAINING PROGRAMS, SUCH AS THOSE UNDER THE MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING ACT (MDTA). THE AGE PATTERN OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH ENROLLED IN THE NYC PARALLELED THAT OF UNEMPLOYED OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH AGE 16-21 IN THE TOTAL LABOR FORCE IN OCTOBER 1964. FOR NONWHITES, THE PROPORTION OF MALE AND FEMALE ENROLLEES WAS FAIRLY EVEN, BUT FOR WHITES, THERE WERE MORE MALES THAN FEMALES. THE NYC PROVIDED THEIR FIRST JOB EXPERIENCE FOR MORE THAN TWO-FIFTHS OF THE OUT-OF-SCHOOL ENROLLEES. THE MEDIAN NUMBER OF PERSONS IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF NYC ENROLLEES WAS FIVE COMPARED WITH A MEDIAN OF FOUR FOR ALL FAMILIES WITH INCOMES BELOW RECOGNIZED POVERTY LINE WHILE ONE-THIRD LIVED IN HOUSEHOLDS OF SEVEN OR MORE, AND NEARLY 10 PERCENT LIVED IN HOUSEHOLDS OF 10 OR MORE. COMPLETION OF THE 10TH GRADE WAS THE MEDIAN EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF THE OUT-OF-SCHOOL ENROLLEES, BUT 27 PERCENT HAD FAILED TO GET PAST THE EIGHTH GRADE. WHITE YOUTH CONSTITUTED 61 PERCENT OF ALL NYC ENROLLEES BUT IN OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROJECTS, THE PERCENTAGES OF WHITE AND NONWHITE WERE 49 AND 51, RESPECTIVELY, COMPARED WITH 72 AND 28 FOR MDTA PROJECTS AND 78 AND 22 FOR ON-THE-JOB-TRAINING. THIS DOCUMENT APPEARED IN "MONTHLY LABOR REVIEW," DECEMBER 1965. (FS)

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The First 50,000 Neighborhood Youth Corps Enrollees

JAMES F. TUCKER*

MANY SCHOOL DROPOUTS leave school because their families either need the additional earning power or lack the means of maintaining the youth in school. The Work-Training Program, a part of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964,[1] provides needy elementary and secondary school students part-time employment opportunities so that their education may be "resumed or continued." To youth already out of school it offers job experience and training in occupational skills so that their employability may be increased. An objective common to both phases is the development of steady work habits and mature attitudes toward work.

Youths were first enrolled in the Work-Training Program during the latter part of December 1964. By June 30, 1965, agreements had been executed with various agencies covering the enrollment of 278,000 young persons (192,000 in school and 86,000 out of school).

The sections that follow compare some of the characteristics of Neighborhood Youth Corps (NYC) enrollees[2] and their households to the general category of poverty-stricken households throughout the entire Nation, and compare NYC enrollees with participants in other antipoverty programs and other major manpower training programs, such as those under the Manpower Development and Training Act.

Age

The median age for NYC enrollees was 17, reflecting the 2 to 1 ratio of in-school over out-of-school participants. Enrollees who had reached age 21 constituted only 1 percent of the total, but nearly 5 percent of those in the out-of-school program.

On the whole, the age pattern of out-of-school youth enrolled in the Neighborhood Youth Corps paralleled that of unemployed out-of-school youth age 16–21 in the total labor force in October 1964.[3] Rates of both enrollment and unemployment were highest for age group 16–17, and progressively lower for ages 18–19 and 20–21.

Among white out-of-school enrollees, the percentage of enrollment decreased with increases in age; the pattern among nonwhite youth was in the opposite direction. One contributing factor stands out clearly: A greater proportion of older white youth are able to find employment other than that offered by the Neighborhood Youth Corps.

In both the in-school and out-of-school programs, 16 and 17 year-olds predominated, as the following tabulation shows:

Age	*All enrollees*	*In school*	*Out of school*
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
16 and 17 years	73.9	80.2	44.4
18 and 19 years	22.5	18.6	40.8
20 and 21 years	3.6	1.2	14.8

Of the approximately 600,000 persons age 14–24 who dropped out of school during the year ending October 1964, 60 percent were 16 and 17 years old (and close to 10 percent were 14 and 15).[4] There are of course many more 16 and 17 year-olds than older youth who are still in high school, resulting in the predominance of the younger group among in-school enrollees.

Sex

Among nonwhite youth, the proportion of male and female enrollees was fairly even in both in-school and out-of-school projects.[5] The same split

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[1] Title I–B authorizes the establishment of the Neighborhood Youth Corps. The program is administered by the U.S. Department of Labor's Manpower Administration.

[2] This comparison is based on personal data administrative records of the first 50,000 NYC enrollees, or most of those who had enrolled during the first 4 months of the program. It is likely that this first group contains fewer high school graduates than does the present program. There is no other known bias in this sample of enrollees.

[3] "Employment of School Age Youth, October 1964," *Monthly Labor Review,* July 1965, pp. 851–856.

[4] "Employment of High School Graduates and Dropouts in 1964," *Monthly Labor Review,* June 1965, pp. 637–643.

[5] Of the nonwhite enrollees in the Neighborhood Youth Corps, 91 percent were Negroes, 5 percent American Indians, and 2 percent of Asiatic descent. The remainder, consisting of Eskimos and Aleuts, are all in Alaska.

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TABLE 1. SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD OF NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH CORPS ENROLLEES, BY SCHOOL STATUS AND COLOR

Number of persons in household	All enrollees	School status		Color	
		In school	Out of school	White	Nonwhite
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1	0.5	0.3	1.8	0.5	0.4
2	5.7	5.3	7.4	6.3	5.0
3	13.4	12.9	15.7	15.8	11.0
4	16.6	16.7	16.4	19.2	14.0
5	16.6	16.6	16.6	18.2	14.5
6	13.3	13.5	12.1	13.4	13.0
7	10.6	10.9	9.5	9.4	12.1
8	7.9	8.1	7.0	6.5	9.6
9	5.7	5.8	5.0	4.2	7.1
10	4.0	4.1	3.6	2.7	5.2
11	2.3	2.3	2.2	1.9	3.1
12	1.5	1.6	1.2	.9	2.1
13 and over	1.9	2.0	1.5	1.0	2.9

held for white youth in in-school projects; but in out-of-school projects only 30 percent of the white enrollees were girls:

Color and school status	*Male*	*Female*
White:		
In school	54.0	46.0
Out of school	70.1	29.9
Nonwhite:		
In school	49.9	50.1
Out of school	54.2	45.8

Among both graduates and dropouts generally, nonwhite females are more likely than white females to be in the labor force. The unemployment rate for nonwhite female dropouts in October 1964 was 34 percent, compared with 13 percent for white female dropouts.

For NYC out-of-school projects, the distribution of enrollment by color differs noticeably from that of other major manpower programs. In NYC, the percentages for whites and nonwhites were 49 and 51, respectively, compared with 72 and 28 for MDTA Institutional projects and 78 and 22 for On-The-Job Training.

Employment

For more than two-fifths of the out-of-school enrollees, the NYC provided their first job experience: 53, 39, and 26 percent, respectively, for the 16–17, 18–19, and 20–21 age groups. Over three-quarters of the in-school enrollees were without employment experience: the comparable percentages for the three age groups were 80, 70, and 59.

Almost all the out-of-school enrollees, and three-fourths of the in-school enrollees, were actively looking for work at the time they joined the NYC:

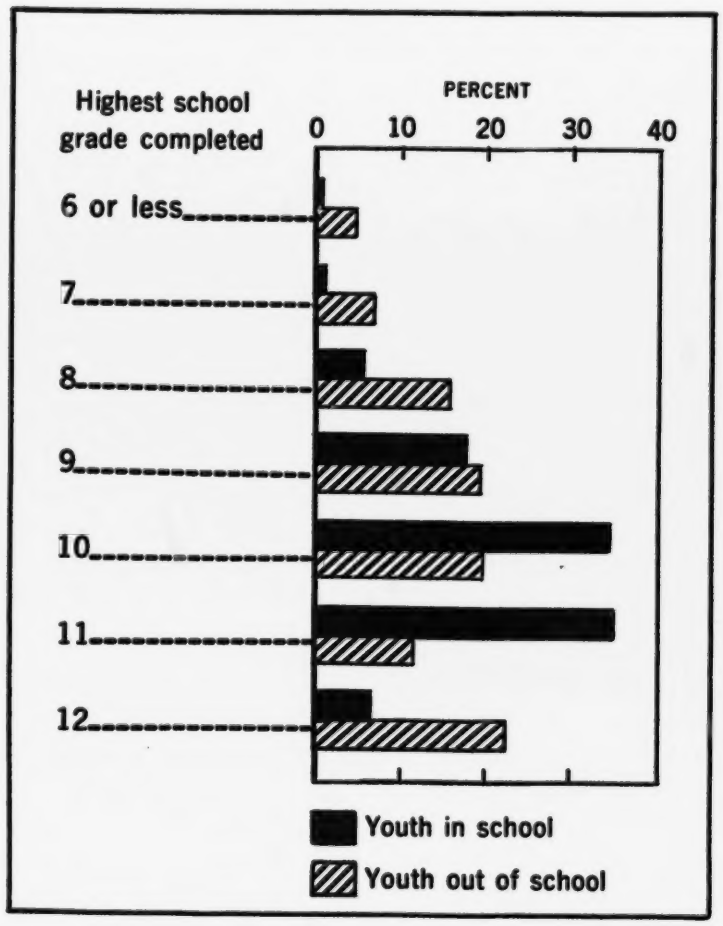
	In school	*Out of school*
All enrollees	100.0	100.0
Employed	7.7	3.7
Looking for work	73.8	93.3
Not looking for work	18.5	3.0

In October 1964, 30 percent of all workers age 14–24 were students, two-thirds of them in elementary or high schools.

Size of Household

For NYC enrollees, the median number of persons in the household was five, compared with a median of four persons for all families with incomes below the recognized poverty line.[6] The median for families in the "nonpoor" category was only 3.6 persons.

Education Level of Neighborhood Youth Corps Enrollees, by School Status



[6] Mollie Orshansky, "Who's Who Among the Poor: A Demographic View of Poverty," *Social Security Bulletin*, July 1965, pp. 3–32; also excerpts in *Monthly Labor Review*, August 1965, pp. 951–956.

TABLE 2. NUMBER OF MONTHS SINCE LEAVING SCHOOL, OUT-OF-SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH CORPS ENROLLEES, BY AGE GROUP

Months	All enrollees	Age		
		16 and 17	18 and 19	20 and 21
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than 1	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.0
1 to 3	17.1	26.6	12.9	1.9
4 to 6	12.2	19.9	7.7	3.1
7 to 12	24.0	27.4	25.8	9.5
13 to 24	22.7	19.8	26.9	20.6
Over 24	23.3	5.9	26.3	64.8

In 1964, 1 percent of the families classified as poor comprised 7 persons or more. Among NYC enrollees, one-third lived in households of 7 persons or more (table 1), and nearly 10 percent lived in households of 10 or more.

Education

Completion of the 10th grade was the median educational level of the out-of-school enrollees, but 27 percent had failed to get past the eighth grade. (See chart.)

One of the factors associated with the proportion of dropouts among out-of-school enrollees has particular relevance: the 31 percent who were able to reach the 10th grade before dropping out. To the extent that 10th and 11th graders are dropping out of school for economic reasons, the NYC in-school program can contribute significantly to the increase in the number of youth who graduate from high school.

Age limits for trainees under MDTA are different from those for NYC, and comparisons are difficult. In two of the major programs under MDTA (Institutional and On-The-Job Training), only 7 percent of the trainees have less than an 8th grade education—the same percentage as in the NYC.

Nearly one-half of all out-of-school enrollees had been out of school for over a year, and almost a quarter for over 2 years. (See table 2.) Of the 16 and 17 year-olds, 25 percent had been out of school for over a year, and 6 percent for over 2 years.

Color

White youth constituted 61 percent of all enrollees: 63 percent of in-school enrollees and 49 percent of those out of school. There is a 3 to 1 ratio of white over nonwhite among unemployed out-of-school youth age 16–21. The smaller percentage of white youth among out-of-school NYC enrollees may result from lesser economic need—in October 1964, only 35 percent of white dropouts were in families with annual incomes below $3,000, as against 54 percent of nonwhite dropouts—and the fact that white youths may pass up NYC enrollment because of more favorable prospects of finding employment paying a higher wage.

To remove want and the fear of want, to give all classes leisure and comfort, and independence, the decencies and refinements of life, the opportunities of mental and moral development, would be like turning water into a desert. The sterile waste would clothe itself with verdure, and the barren places where life seemed banned would ere long be dappled with the shade of trees and musical with the song of birds. Talents now hidden, virtues unsuspected, would come forth to make human life richer, fuller, happier, nobler. For in these round men who are stuck into three-cornered holes, and three-cornered men who are jammed into round holes; in these men who are wasting their energies in the scramble to be rich; in these who in factories are turned into machines, or are chained by necessity to bench or plow; in these children who are growing up in squalor, and vice, and ignorance, are powers of the highest order, talents the most splendid. They need but the opportunity to bring them out.

—Henry George, quoted in Charles P. Curtis, Jr., and Ferris Greenslet, *The Practical Cogitator.*

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